

Message Text

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PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /101 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8830

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

CALCUTTA 8289

CINPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI SECTION 1 OF 2 14779

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN, STOP

SUBJ: FAMILY PLANNING IMPACTING ON EASTERN UP; OPPOSITION PARTIES
IN DISARRAY; PASSIVE SUPPORT FOR CONGRESS

SUMMARY: THIS REPORT IS BASED ON A TWELVE-DAY TRIP BY AN
EMBASSY OFFICER AND LOCAL POLITICAL SPECILIST IN EASTER
UTTAR PREDESH AND NORTHERASTERN MADHY PRADESH.
LOCAL OFFICIALS, COLLECTORS, POLICE SUPERVISORS, CONGRESS PARTY
OFFICERS, ACADEMINICANS, MUNICIPAL CHAIRMEN AND JOURNALISTS WERE
THE PRIMARY SOURCES OF THE INFORMATION. THESE THIRTY INTERVIEWS
WERE CHECKED AGAINST IMPROMPTU DISCUSSION WITH LOCAL CITIZENS,
INCLUDING SEVERAL ROADSIDE SESSIONS IN THE LOCAL DIALECT CON-
DUCTED WITH RURAL LABORERES AND FARMERS. THE FAMILY PLANNING
PROGRAM WAS REACHING DOWN TO THE RURAL POOR, AND IMPACTING
WIDELY. TWENTY- POINT PROGRAM REFORMS, INDLCUING LAND SITRIBUTION,
WERE ALOMOST COMPLETE, REPORTED OFFICIALS. NOT SO, SAID
THE INTENDED BENFICIARIES WITH WHOM WE SPOKE, BUT MANY
HARBORED EXPECTATIONS, CAUTIOUS THOUGH THESE MIGHT BE.
OPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES WERE FOUND QUIESCENT OR IN
DISARRYA. LOCAL CONGRESS PARTY LEADERS ASSERTED, WITHOUT
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BEING VERY CONVINCING, THAT THEY WERE PREPARED FOR ELECTIONS.

THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF THE PENDING CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS. LAW AND ORDER APPARENTLY PREVAILED EVERYWHERE, WITH SOME ACADEMICIANS EVEN MORE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE MERGENCY THAN POLICE SUPERVISORS. END SUMMARY

1. EXCEPT THOSE FEW WHO WERE TEMPORARILY DEALING WITH FOOD RELIEF, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAMILY PANNING PROGRAM WAS CLEARLY THE TOP PRIORITY FOR ALL OF THE LOCAL OFFICIALS IN EASTERN UTTAR PRADESH AND NORTHEASTER MADHY PRADESH. COLLECTORS ESTIMATED THEY WERE SPENDING ONE-THIRD OR MORE OF THEIR TIME ON THIS EFFORT. LOCAL OFFICIALS REPEATEDLY SAID THIS WAS THE TOPIC THAT CONCERNED THEIR SUPERIORS AND THE FIRST THING SUPERVISORS WANTED TO HEAR ABOUT ON VISITS OR READ IN REPORTS. OFFICIALS WERE CANDED IN ADMITTING THERE WERE STRONG DISINCENTIVES AS WELL AS INCENTIVES TO PROSPECTIVE TARGETS. THE TARGET FAMILY WAS DESCRIBED AS ONE WITH THE HUSBAND UNDER FIFTY, WIFE UNDER FORTY-FIVE, WITH THREE OR MOR CHILDREN. WIVES CAN VOLUNTEER INSTEAD OF HUSBAND, BUT VASECTOMIES WERE THE PREFERRED OPERATION SINCE THEY WERE SIMPLE AND QUICK. COLLECTORS ESTIMATED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THEIR TARGET GOALS FROM 25 PERCENT IN ALLAHABAD AND FAIZABAD (UP) TO 300 PERCENT IN JABALPUR (MP). WE HAD THE IMPRESSION SOME COLLECTORS IN UP HAD BEEN REASSIGNED FOR FAILING TO MAKE THEIR FP QUOTAS. CONGRESS PARTY OFFICIALS AND MLAS ALSO ASSERTED THEY WERE ACTIVE IN THE PROGRAM, BUT NONE EVER SAID HE DID ANYTHING MORE THAN ATTEND A FAMILY PALNNING CAMP OR RALLY, OR EXHORTED HIS COLLEAGUES TO ASSIST IN THE PROGRAM. THE COLLECTORS NEVER SAID AS MUCH, BUT CLEARLY THEY FLET THEY WERE CARRYING THE BRUNT OF THE PROGRAM, AND THE POLITICOS' ACTIVITY WAS OF LITTLE IMPORT.

2. POSITIVE INCENTIVES WERE LIMITED TO CASH, 100 RUPEES PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL OFFICIALS ASSIGN QUOTAS TO LOCAL BUSINESSMEN AS WELL AS ADMINISTRATIVE AND EDUCATIONAL OFFICERS. BUSINESSMEN WHO CAN PAY HAVE BEEN OFFERING THE POOR BONUSES TO ACCEPT VASECTOMIES. THE VWM EST FIGURE MENTIONED WAS THAT AN INDIVIDUAL RECEIVED 450 RUPEES. BUSINESSMEN AND GOVERNMENT SUPERVISORS HAVE THREATEND LOSS OF JOBS OR SUSPENSION OF PROMOTION TO THOSE

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WHO DO NOT COOPERATE. IT WAS EVIDENT FROM ROADSIDE QUESTION SESSIONS THAT THE POOR AND THE LANDLESS LABORERS FELT THEMSELVES TO BE PARTICULAR TARGETS OF THE STERILIZATION PROGRAM THEY CITED PRESSURES FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND EMPLOYERS. MANY TIMES INDIVIDUALS ADIS THEY FELT THEY HAD TO COMPLY, OR LOSE THEIR JOBS OR OPPORTUNIES TO FARM. THERE WAS WIDESPREAD IF UNORGANIZED RESENTMENT, MOSLEMS TENDED TO BE MORE RESENTFUL THAN HINDUS, BUT IT WAS DESCRIBED IN THE

ROADSIDE SESSIONS AS A RICH VERSUS POOR QUESTION. OUR CASUAL INTERLOCUTORS SAID FREQUENTLY, "THE RICH NEVER HAVE IT DONE." THERE WAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE FEAR AMONG THIS GROUP THAT THE VASECTOMY RESULTS IN LOSS OF POTENCY OR ABILITY TO DO HARD LABOR, AND FOR THAT REASON MANY MEN SENT THEIR WIVES INSTEAD OF VOLUNTEERING THEMSELVES. OFTEN OUR ROADSIDE CONVERSATIONALISTS SAID THEY KNEW OF PEOPLE WHO HAD COMPLICATIONS, AND HAD HAD TO SPEND THEIR BONUS MONEY FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION. (COLLECTORS INVARIABLY STRESSED THAT THOSE WITH COMPLICATIONS WERE CARED FOR FREE OF CHARGE AND WERE ADMITTED TO HOSPITALS ON A FIRST PRIORITY BASIS) NONE OF OUR INTERVIEWS IN SULTANPUR, WHERE THERE WAS POLICE SUPPRESSION AT A MOSLEM DEMONSTRATION, MENTIONED ANY PROBLEM THERE ARISING FROM IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM AMONG MOSLEMS, BUT TWO JOURNALISTS IN LUCKNOW WERE AWARE OF IT AND ONE SAID THERE WERE 6 TO

10 FATALITIES.

3. POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS WAS VIRTUALLY NIL. CONGRESS PARTY LEADERS AND THE FEW YOUTH CONGRESS LEADERS WE MET ASSERTED THEIR ORGANIZATIONS WERE HEALTHY, AND WERE PREPARED TO WAGE AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN AT ANY TIME. THEY WERE NOT CONVINCING. WHEN ASKED FOR PROOF OF ACTIVITY AND CADRE MEMBERSHIP FIGURES, THEY WERE VAGUE.

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AUTHORITIES SAID THERE WAS NO ORGANIZED OPPOSITION POLITICAL ACTIVITY, THE SOLE EXCEPTION BEING THE ODD MEETING OF OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTY WORKERS IN A HALL. THE BLD LEADERS, CHARAN SINGH, FOR EXAMPLE, CHARTERED THE CULTURAL CENTER HALL IN JAUNPUR FOR A CLOSED-DOOR MEETING WITH HIS WORKERS. THERE IS NO PRESS COVERAGE OF SUCH MEETINGS. SOME JOURNALISTS SAID THE CONGRESS WOULD WIN AN OVERWHELMING VICTORY IN ANY ELECTION IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH 1977, EVEN IF IT WERE COMPLETELY FREE AND ALL THE OPPOSITION LEADERS RELEASED. THERE WAS ALSO A CONSENSUS, HOWEVER, THAT THIS MIGHT BE A FLEETING ADVANTAGE. A YEAR FROM NOW, SAID ONE CRITIC, THINGS MAY NOT LOOK SO GOOD FOR MRS. GANDHI AND THE CONGRESS. IN LUCKNOW, JOURNALISTS ASSERTED THAT THE UP STATE GOVERNMENT WAS A PUPPET ORGANIZATION, TOTALLY DIRECTED AND CONTROLLED BY THE CENTER. ON REPORTER CALLED IT "A TELEPHONE ADMINISTRATION." OBSERVERS WERE UNANIMOUS IN AGREEING THAT SANJAY GANDHI COULD HAVE WHATEVER SEAT HE WANTED IN UP. A MUNICIPAL COUNSELOR SAID SANJAY HAD ALREADY SELECTED HIS DISTRICT, AMETHI, ADJACENT TO SULTANPUR, AND NOW HELD BY VIDYA DHAR BAJPAI. THERE IS SOME FEELING SANJAY WOULD

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BRING SUBSTANTIAL BENEFITS TO ANY DISTRICT WHICH ELECTED HIM.

4. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE LAWYER, NO ONE EXPRESSED ANY INTEREST IN THE PENDING CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS OR REPORTED ANY DISCUSSION OF THEM. NO ONE RAISED THE SUBJECT. THE PREVAILING ATTITUDE WAS THAT IT REALLY WASN'T ANY CONCERN. THE ONE LAWYER, ONE OF THREE OR FOUR INTERLOCUTORS ENCOUNTERED. WHOSE DEMOCRATIC CONVICTIONS WERE SO STRONG THAT THEY MADE NO ATTEMPT TO HIDE THEM, ASSERTED THAT IT WAS INDIA'S TRAGEDY THAT MRS. GANDHI HAD CIRCUMVENTED THE LAW, DEPRIVED THE JUDICIARY OF INDEPENDENCE, AND WAS NOW PREPARING TO HAVE THESE ACTS CODIFIED IN THE PENDING AMENDMENTS. HE LAMENTED, "THE FIRST GANDHI TAUGHT US TO BE BRAVE, THE SECOND TAUGHT US THE MEANING OF FEAR. 270,000 ARRESTS HAVE INTIMIDATED A NATION OF 600 MILLION PEOPLE."

5. THERE WAS SUBSTANTIAL UNANIMITY ON THE IMPROVEMENT IN LAW AND ORDER SINCE THE EMERGENCY. ACADEMIC LEADERS WERE THE MOST VOCIFEROUS IN PROCLAIMING THE SATISFACTION WITH FULLY FUNCTIONING UNIVERSITIES, AS CONTRASTED WITH THE PRE-EMERGENCY SCHAOS. THE VICE CHANCELLOR OF BENARES HINDU

POINTED OUT THAT HIS HOUSE HAD BEEN RANSACKED TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE EMERGENCY WAS DECLARED. THE VICE AHNCELLOR OF JABALPUR RECOUNTED HOW HIS JUEST HOUSE, SCIENCE AND CLASSROOM BUILDING WERE BURNED IN THE MONTHS BEFORE JUNE 1975. BOTH MEN SAID ONLY RELATIVELY FEW ARREST WERE REQUIRED TO BRING PEACE BACK TO THE CAMPUSES, 33 AT BHU AND 31 AT JABLAPUR. A THIED VICE CHANCELLOR ADMITTED THAT CLAM HAD RETURNED TO THIS INSTITUTION, BUT DID ADD THAT SOME WAY MUST BE FOUND TO RESTORE THAT SPIRIT OF ACADEMIC INQUIRY AND DISCUSSUION WHICH HE SAID IS NOW STIFLED. HE ALSO ADBOCATED SOME LEGITIMATE METHOD WHEREBY THE STUDENTS COULD PARTICIPATE IN THE GOVERNANCE OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

6. OFFICIALS ASSERTED THAT LAND DISTRIBUTION, SURPLUS AGRI-CULTURAL LAND AND HOUSEHOLD PLOTS, WAS LARGELY COMPLETE. SOME SURPLUS LAND IS STILL TIED UP IN COURT SUITS, THEY SAID, BUT ON BALANCE THEY WERE SATISFIED THAT WHAT WAS AVAILABLE HAS NOW BEEN DEEDED AND IN MANY CASES OCCUPIED BY HARIJAN AND OTHER POOR RECIPIENTS. ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS, CONFIDENTIAL

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CREDITS AND GRANTS HAD BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO THE NEW LY ENFRANCHISED FARMERS. OFFICIALS DID ADMIT, HOWEVER, THAT NOT ALL THE LANDLESS RECEIVED LAND. THEY ALSO ADMITTED THAT SOME OF THE PLOTS WERE VERY SMALL. STATISTICALLY, THE MEAN, ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL FIGURES, WAS LITTLE MORE THAN AN ACRE TO SOME FORTY PERCENT OF THE ELIGIBLE. OFFICIALS ALSO ASSERTED WAGE INCREASES PER THE TWENTY-POINT PLAN WERE THE NORM.

7. ALTHOUGH WVERYWHERE WE HELD ROADSID SESSIONS WE FOUND AWARENESS OF THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM AND PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE INVOLVED, WE FOUND VERY FEW LAND RECIPIENTS. OUR INTERLOCUTORS SAID THEY HAD HEARD ABOUT THE PLANS, OR THEY KNEW SOMEONE WHO HAD RECEIVED LAND, BUT THEY ALMMOST ALWAYS SAID THERE WAS NO CREDIT, AND THERE WAS VERY LITTLE LAND TO BE DISTRIBUTED ANYWAY. THEY OFTEN SAID THAT THE RICH FARMERS WERE ABLE TO AVOID THE CEILINGS. SEVERAL SAID THEY HAD RECEIVED BETTER WAGES, BUT SOME EVEN ASSERTED THE GOVERNMENT PAID LESS THAN THE NEW MINIMUN WAGES ON PLUBLIC PROJECTS. WE HAD THE IMPRESSION THERE WAS, NONETHELESS, SOME FEELING OF INCREASED EXPECTATION ON THE PART OF THESE PEOPLE WHO OCCUPIED THE LOWEST RUNG ON THE ECONOMIC LADDER. IN SPITE OF OR SOMETIMES BECAUSE OF THEIR POSITION, THEY SAID THEY WOULD SUPPORT MRS. GANDHI IN AN ELECTION. THEY ALL SEEMED TO BELIEVE THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE. NONE, HOWEVER, MANIFESTED ANY SPECIAL INTEREST IN HAVING AN ELECTION CALLED. SAXBE

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